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Publications Review Board

"This Web Blog is a Privacy Act system of Records"

(U) Presidential Daily Briefing

Posted on March 23, 2010 by [redacted]

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Historical Background.

(U//FOUO) The declassification of the PDB is a sticky subject and has been for some time. It became especially sticky since the creation of the DNI created controversy over who owns the historical PDB's. (U)In the summer of 2007 at the annual convention of the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations, DCIA Hayden was asked about this issue and his answer was that the decision to declassify PDBs rests at the White House. He also officially acknowledged that "the current president (George W. Bush) prefers to get his briefings orally." Clinton preferred to get his in writing with no briefer.

For a more concise account of what is allowable when it comes to the PDB see 4/13/2010 posting by [redacted]

[redacted] / April 19, 2010 /
3:59:04 PM EDT (b)(3) CIAAct
(b)(6)

Which is here.

[redacted] / April 20, 2010 /
7:22:55 AM EDT

(U) In the fall of 2007 a federal judge, ruled that, "the CIA provided ample justification that the disclosure of the two PDBs (the requester asked for the PDBs for 8/6/1965 and 4/2/1965) would reveal protected intelligence sources and methods."

(U) The fact is that dozens of PDB's from the LBJ administration were "accidentally" declassified which contain intel information about such things as the 1967 Arab Israeli war and about a 1965 naval skirmish between China and Chinese nationalist patrol crafts.

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6, 2001 PDB has been declassified as well.

(U) This indicates that raw intelligence was included in the briefings in the past, and that with the passage of time, or due to force of political circumstances, specific contents can be acknowledged.

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(U//FOUO) What is Still classified.



(U//FOUO) But, we can allow an author to say that the briefings are tailored to the president's needs and schedule -- and that the current (or better said more recent ones ie for Bush and Obama) the PDBs are more direct. (S) but we will not allow an author to say that subject matter experts (such as people from the military or the State Department or any other agency of the USG) are brought in from the field to speak to specific topics. Neither do we allow specific topics even obvious ones like the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

* Any specific contents of briefings to the current president remain classified.

(U//FOUO) this prohibition includes topics that the CIA PRB would've allowed, such as: Al Qaeda, the security situation in Afghanistan, concerns relative to Russia and China, the impact of the global economic crisis, climate and population change as security issues, etc.

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(U//FOUO) It is publishable to say that the PDB audience frequently ask questions but we cannot say who is in the audience except that there are, as [redacted] said "others at the president's discretion." We also object to saying that the questions are of a policy nature and or that they drive intelligence priorities.

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(U//FOUO) It is unclassified that the PDB makes clear to the President what the IC knows and how it knows it. We allowed Ms. [redacted] to say that occasionally there is raw intelligence included but we require the deletion of anything that we know and anything that indicates how we came to know it, for briefings to the current president.

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- [redacted] (b)(1)
- (U) List of Declassified Presidential Directive Titles & Years (b)(3) NatSecAct
- (U) PDB Allowable Information

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